

*A detection*

# Of the Shipwrights new Tricks in Combination with Captain Ely, against

## LEAD-SHEATHING.

*Practis'd upon the Trumbal-Gally in Mr. Wells's Dock,  
Aug. 31. MDC XCIX.*

So an Account of the *Lead sheathing* upon the W E E D A W.

*Together with a new Publication of the charge thereof.  
At 12d. a foot.*

One would think the Shipwrights might be content with their profitable Trade of Building and necessary Reparation of Ships, which will continually bring wealth and work enough to them, let their Owners preserve them as well as they can, and Sheath with Lead that will: But 'tis not the bare profit perhaps of Wood sheathing that makes them so obstinate against Evident Truth, tho' that be considerable also. They who live not by the Preservation, but by the Damage and Decays of Plank and Shipping, which the *Worm* and *Wood-sheathing* do various ways promote, cannot be reconciled to Lead-sheathing, + which ('tis fairly prov'd by Reason and Experience) does much preserve them: And therefore the Shipwrights in combination with one Captain Ely, formerly a Shipwright also, and now the *English East-India Companies* Husband, bend all their force and false suggestions, as the Old ones are baffled, with new tricks to oppose it, as appear'd more particularly of late upon the *Trumbal Galley*. which (having made one *East-India* Voyage in her Lead-sheathing, and being taken into the said Company's service) was brought into the Dock to fit, and every next day Mr. Hale, appointed by Mr. Whaley her Owner to meet him about 5 in the afternoon at the Ships side, to view her Sheathing to mend what might be amiss; when they were strangely surpriz'd to find the Lead-sheathing suddenly stript off. But to satisfy the Owner, they told him, (as he did Mr. Hale the next morning) that Captain Ely had brought an Order from the Company, that she must be sheathed with Wood, and dispatch'd forthwith, which the same day, about noon, meeting with some of them, who signed the Order for fitting her out,) he found to be entirely false; they never having Order'd her Lead-sheathing to be stript off, or, if there were cause for it, to lose Wood-sheathing upon him, as they declared to him in Mr. Hale's presence, at which he seem'd to be very much concerned that he should be put to such unnecessary charge.

But if his Captain, (who was not present at this stripping, and who also had formerly been a Shipwright) was consenting or conniving at it, it is suppos'd (his Owner having left all things to his ordering, as he says) he was fully able to pacify him, when he found how much he had saved him of the usual charge of the Wood sheathing, which doubtless the Shipwrights amongst them had agreed to allow, be it what it will, rather than this Lead-sheathing should be continued, or a new one put on, as Mr. Hale, upon his discourse afterward with Mr. Whaley, can give very good reasons to believe. But as for the hasty stripping, this nimble operation that could not stay one day for a fair view, sufficiently declares to all indifferent persons the concern they lay under, least its excellency should appear, for there been any thing material to complain of, they would certainly have expos'd it to be seen by every body.

The Sheathing being stript, there appear'd one place upon the Garble-strake, on the Starboard side abaft, where the *Worm* had eaten, which Captain Ely, having espied, mightily bounced of his discovery, till the Owner said he would do Mr. Hale that right, to tell him that the Lead had by an accident been rubb'd off in that place at her first coming out of the Dock. But the thing they insist on, that requir'd her stripping was, that the seams wanted caulking, some said they were not well done at first, tho' to those that went down with Mr. Hale, they seem'd all well; But why new Caulking here, and not under the Wood-sheathing above, which was done at the same time? and as they told the Owner, need not be stript these 10 years, 'twas readily answer'd, the Lead-sheathing decay'd the Oakum under it; but be that as it will, stripping was resolv'd on by Captain Ely, right or wrong; he told her Owner before she was put into the Dock, that the Lead-sheathing must come off, at which he being somewhat mov'd, said the Ship was his, and he would see very good cause for it, first; but it seems it was agreed amongst them, that for that reason he should not see't at all. And, let Captain Ely deny, or say what he will to make himself to his Masters, for abusing their Authority, the great Zeal and Concernment he is transport'd with, (now senseless forever) against the Lead-sheathing, relating to this Ship as well as those already gone in the Company's Service, who would have sheathed with Lead, if they had been permitted, does so much discover his great Ignorance and Prejudice, that no body believes him, nor minds what he says, but such as are oblig'd to comply with his Power in Office.

The same Trick was formerly play'd for the better justification of stripping the *Antelope's* first Lead-sheathing (all a sudden) to Caulk her Seams without acquainting her Commander, Captain Hammond, he having said too many Truths in favour of it; but he affirming to her Owner, Mr. Shepherd, that the Seams were very good and sound, appointed a time to hear them all together, when Mr. Hale producing some of the Spun Yarn that lay in her Seams full of Pitch, fresh and strong as at first, the Shipwright was forced to own it to Mr. Shepherd, and said, that the seams indeed, were sound and good next the Lead, but that they were rotted from within Board, and not well done at first, which requir'd new Caulking, and for that reason, as also to new drive her Iron-spikes, which had been from her first building. He found it necessary to strip her sheathing, not because 'twas Lead, for had it been a Wood-sheathing never so good, he said, it must come off. But if Caulking after one Voyage be made an excuse for stripping, why don't they Caulk better at first? The true reason must be, because a Lead-sheathing is to be brought on; And if these Tricks and Pretences will serve, to be sure a Lead-sheathing (tho' 'twould last as long as the Ship) can be stript every Voyage.



If Owners will still believe the Shipwright, and suffer themselves to be thus imposed upon, Who can help it? But if their Commander, Master, or some body else that understands it, they can trust, will be constantly by, but for 2 or 3 days, and see the searching and caulking of every Seam, and found Oakam driven themselves, certainly their trouble or expence would be very well recompenced; for (his objection being once remov'd) they could have no pretence thus to put the unnecessary charge of a new sheathing upon them. Tho' Mr. Hale has sufficiently cleared this matter about the Seams, as well as other things, in his *Antelope's Evidence*, Printed in May 1698. Several Months before she was new Sheath'd, which some of them should have Answer'd, and put his name to it, if they had had any thing to say against the Truth thereof, while the Ships side, with her seams and sheathing lay in the Dock, to be seen by every body, which would easily determine the point, and certainly they had done it, under those provocations, if they had had any thing material to say against it: But they could never answer that, nor any other of the Papers, he has been obliged to Print, to vindicate the excellency of his Lead-sheathing, against their many false suggestions, and idle stories they had raised about it. But the Truth of that Paper appears by the Testimony of six Experienc'd Masters, and Commanders of good credit, who in presence of the Navy-Board, viewed the *Antelope's* Lead-sheathing, and the Plank and Seams where it was stript, and have justified it under their hands among other things, That (not to mention the known damage of the great Iron-Nails, of the other) they found the Lead-sheathing did preserve the Plank better, more cool, smooth and sound, and the Oakam longer in the Seams, than a Wood-sheathing could do, besides its certain security against the Worm, and great benefit in Sayling, &c.

The *Weedaw Friggot* having made her Voyage in her Lead-sheathing, to Guinea, and the West-Indies, was brought into Mr. Fowle's Dock at Lime-house, the 19th. Instant, to be fitted out for the same Voyage again, where any one may find her sheathing and seams under it, very good and sound, in respect of the sheathing it self, and no cause for stripping, save only in those places where the Shipwright had mixt Elm Plank with the Oaks, which being doted and rotten, was shifted, about a tenth part, which was with little charges new sheath'd with Lead: But where upon searching the Plank was found; they found the Seams sound also, and no need of stripping the whole sheathing, as the *Trumball-Galley* was, to new caulk her Seams, pretending the Lead-sheathing had rotted the Oakam under it, as abovementioned. The *Foe* had visited her sheathing two nights before she came into the Dock, but finding themselves discover'd by the Watch, who was set for that purpose, after they had torn off about two Foot, they got off to the shoar, being pursu'd, they left their Boat and ran away.

*Obj.* It is newly objected. That tho' what is said of the preference of Lead-sheathing to that of Wood, may be true, yet the thing can never do; for if the Shipwrights find they cannot keep it out, they will agree to leave some places so defectively Caulk'd about the Seams, or Trunnel-holes, &c. not discoverable by the eye, which shall soon become very Leaky, and then lay the fault upon the Lead-sheathing. Thus the Owners being over perswaded, or always in fear of ill Caulking, will be unwilling to venture it, and so the Lead-sheathing will fall; and if Mr. Hale will carry it on, he must get a Dock of his own.

*Ans. 1.* This ill Caulking may, by the Owners care, and little charge, be prevented by the means abovementioned: Or they may reserve the Caulkers (which is not the Carpenters) work to themselves, and imploy those they can trust to see it well done, unless the Shipwright will lay this Trick aside, and undertake for the goodness of his Seams, that they shall last (at least) as long under a Lead as under a Wood-sheathing, which (it is plain from what is proved by Reason and Experience as above) preserves them better.

2. But if they will not, certainly if Owners would but consult their interest also, which is very considerable in this matter, they would not suffer their own Reason and Profit to be thus invaded by the Tricks and Interest of the Shipwrights, to their great charge and damage to their Ships and Sayling; but agree amongst themselves to oblige the Shipwrights, who get their living by them, and vast profit otherwise, by new Building and necessary Reparation of their Ships) to permit them quietly to preserve their Hulls by careful Caulking and Lead-sheathing, or any ways else they think fit.

3. As for Mr. Hale's taking a Dock purposely for that Work, there is no need, nor reason for that, for if Lead-sheathing be countenanced, it is not to be supposed, one or two Docks would be sufficient to dispatch all that will sheath with Lead, many of which may happen at the same time. He is indeed off'ed by a Shipwright to a *Hulk* in a convenient place to Careene Ships of any burthen for his Lead-sheathing, which (as he is informed) may be better done, and Caulk'd also upon the Careene, than in a Dock. But this Shipwright is afraid to do so, till he can receive some assurance that the Lead-sheathing will go on, that he may not expose himself to censure and the ill will of his Fraternity for nothing.

Now for the further encouragement of those that shall make use of this Lead-Sheathing hereafter, altho' *Antelope's Evidence* abovementioned, and other Printed Papers, its much greater cheapness (as well as its safety) is fully proved at the rate of 14d. a foot, in respect of an East-India Wood-Sheathing, at 1 Penny, and even of an ordinary Streights Sheathing of 7d. a foot, by the graving saved, duration as the Lead when stript. Mr. Hale hereby proposes to do it for 12d. a foot with the same thickness of Lead as the Wood, 3 l. to the foot, and the same Nailing at 1½ inch distance, close driven in the Seams, with the Nails hitherto used, approved by long experience everywise proper for the work, allowing only for extraordinary thickness of the bottom of the Keel and Cut-water, as that shall be required to be done; and for abundant protection against Beets and Lyters, he will Sheath over and between the Wales with Lead a third part thicker, and double nailing, driving one between each; Provided always, that there be no Wood-sheathing above, and that the Carpenter or Caulker may have no pretence of business to do on the side he is at work, both hitherto by their Spawles, Stages, &c. caused him great trouble and damage, but that the Ships be prepar'd (by paying, and parcelling the Iron-Work, Spun-Tarn in the Seams, or otherwise, as they shall think fit) ready to bring the Lead-sheathing on, desiring only that he may have the use of the boards and materials in the Yard, to make his Table for his Plumbers to open and fit his Lead, and for Stages convenient to bring it on, and a room as near the Ship as may be to lock up his goods till his work be done.

Or to enforce this Improvement for publick good as well as benefit to those that use it, (altho' his Patent be in being, yet) if any one thinks he can perform the work of Sheathing cheaper, and as well with Nails of his providing, he is willing to sell them his Lead at the rates published, which others pay for Houses, and other purposes, viz. 16 s. a Hundred, for the thicker sorts of 6 l. to the foot and upwards, and for the thinner sorts 12 d. a hundred more for each pound in a foot less: Or if they please to buy their Lead themselves and send it into his Mill at Deptford, he will Cast and Mill it for them, and return them Weight in Weight in Mill'd Lead, at 5 s. a hundred for the thicker sorts, and 12 d. a hundred for each pound a foot thinner as aforesaid.

Mr. Hale lives at the Mill'd-Lead sign in Orange-street, by Red-Lyon-Square, who undertakes all Lead Work about Churches, Houses, &c. as well as Sheathing, having Plumbers and Workmen to perform the same, and sells his Solder for 6 d. a pound.